

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SPECIAL PANEL ON POSTAL REFORM AND OVERSIGHT
CONGRESSMAN JOHN M. MCHUGH, CHAIRMAN**



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Brynn Barnett (Rep. McHugh)
202-225-4611
David Marin (Govt. Reform)
202-225-5074

**SPECIAL PANEL ON POSTAL REFORM TO HEAR EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE
ON USPS REFORM IN CHICAGO, IL HEARING THURSDAY
Testimony to Come from Heads of Postal Unions and Management Organizations**

*What are the key issues we must address that confront postal employees today?
What reforms are needed to keep the Postal Service operating as a viable entity?*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Feb. 3, 2004) –

WHAT: House Government Reform Committee, Special Panel on Postal Reform and Oversight Hearing: "Answering the Administration's Call for Postal Reform – Part II"

WHEN: Thursday, February 5, 2004, 1 p.m. (CST)

WHERE: Room 2525, Dirksen Federal Courthouse
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL

WITNESSES:

Panel One:

William Burrus, President, American Postal Workers Union
William H. Young, President, National Association of Letter Carriers
Dale Holton, President, National Rural Letter Carriers Association
John Hegarty, National President, National Postal Mail Handlers Union

Panel Two:

Walter Olihovik, National President, National Association of Postmasters of the United States
Steve LeNoir, President, National League of Postmasters
Vincent Palladino, President, National Association of Postal Supervisors

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BACKGROUND:

The seven organizations providing testimony represent the more than 800,000 employees of USPS. These employees – letter carriers, clerks, mail handlers, supervisors, and postmasters – are vital stakeholders in America's postal system, and have a vested interest in seeing effective and timely reform of the postal service. Presidents of the organizations will provide input on key considerations for Congress as it moves forward in enacting USPS reform.

The American Postal Workers Union of the AFL-CIO represents employees of USPS who are clerks, maintenance employees, motor vehicle operators, and non-mail processing professional employees. The National Association of Letter Carriers stands on behalf of active and retired city delivery letter carriers employed by the USPS. The National Rural Letter Carriers Association strives to improve the work conditions and methods used by rural letter carriers. The National Postal Mail Handlers Union represents mail handlers in labor negotiations with USPS.

The National Association of Postmasters of the United States promotes the interests of USPS postmasters. The National Association of Postal Supervisors represents active and retired USPS supervisors, managers and postmasters. The National League of Postmasters is an independent, nonpartisan professional association for postmasters.

Other Special Panel Hearings

This hearing is the second of three to be conducted by the Special Panel for Postal Reform and Oversight. The Panel will hold a hearing in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building on February 11 at 1 p.m. to hear testimony given by chief executives of USPS clients and competitors. In a hearing on January 28, USPS and Administration officials shared with the Panel their views on comprehensive postal reform.

President's Commission and Administration Recommendations

On July 31, 2003, the President's Commission on the Postal Service released its recommendations for maintaining the viability of USPS. Roughly half of these require legislative changes, and most of the recommendations concern issues addressed in earlier Postal Reform proposals. New issues raised by the Commission include reform of the collective bargaining process and legislative changes making it easier to close post offices and processing centers. In addition, the Commission recommended that the Postal Service not be responsible for funding the portion of CSRS employees' pensions that are attributable to their prior military service.

In December, after a meeting President Bush held with members of his Commission on the Postal Service, the Department of the Treasury released five principles that should guide Congress's effort to reform the Postal Service. Those principles are:

- **Implement Best Practices:** Ensure that USPS's governing body is equipped to meet the responsibilities and objectives of an enterprise of its size and scope.
- **Transparency:** Ensure that important factual information on USPS's product costs and performance is accurately measured and made available to the public in a timely manner.
- **Flexibility:** Ensure that USPS's governing body and management have the authority to reduce costs, set rates, and adjust key aspects of its business in order to meet its obligations to customers in a dynamic marketplace.

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- **Accountability:** Ensure that a USPS operating with greater flexibility has appropriate independent oversight to protect consumer welfare and universal mail service.
- **Self-Financing:** Ensure that a USPS operating with greater flexibility is financially self-sufficient, covering all of its obligations.

ABOUT THE SPECIAL PANEL ON POSTAL REFORM AND OVERSIGHT:

The House Government Reform Committee's Special Panel on Postal Reform and Oversight is charged with helping reform the outdated postal system, currently facing about \$90 billion in liabilities and obligations and in the midst of the biggest overhaul since it became an independent government entity under the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970.

The panel is chaired by Rep. John M. McHugh (R-NY), and working closely with the Administration to enact postal reform. Rep. McHugh and the panel report directly to Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis, making postal reform a full committee priority.

Other Committee members appointed to the panel are: Reps. Dan Burton (R-IN) Edward L. Schrock (R-VA), Candice Miller (R-MI), Tim Murphy (R-PA), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Major R. Owens (D-NY), Edolphus Towns (D-NY) Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), and Wm. Lacy Clay (D-MO).

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